



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

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OFFICE OF
ENFORCEMENT AND
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Mr. Mark L. McKoy
FutureGen Project
National Energy Technology Laboratory
U.S. Department of Energy
P.O. Box 880,
Morgantown, WV 26507-0880

Dear Mr. McKoy:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Department of Energy's (DOE) FutureGen Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (CEQ# 20070489).

The FutureGen Project was conceived to support the initiatives and recommendations of the National Energy Policy issued in May 2001. This included research, development, and demonstration programs with the goals of developing and demonstrating coal power systems with near zero environmental emissions, while maintaining low production costs. Specifically, DOE proposes to provide financial assistance for this project to the FutureGen Alliance, Inc., assuming that one or more sites would be found acceptable in the Record of Decision (ROD). DOE tentatively finds all four (Mattoon, Illinois; Tuscola, Illinois; Jewett, Texas; and Odessa, Texas) sites to be acceptable. If DOE ultimately selects the preferred alternative (to grant financial assistance to implement the project at any of the four sites), it would determine for each site whether mitigation of specified potential impacts would be required.

If more than one site is approved by DOE in the ROD, the host site would be selected by the Alliance. After the host site is selected, the Alliance will conduct additional site characterization studies, prepare a site-specific design (including any design modifications that would reduce risks), and obtain relevant environmental, utility, and operational permits for the project. EPA understands that, based on the results of the additional site-characterization and site-specific preliminary design, DOE will re-examine the potential risks as part of a

Supplemental Analysis or a Supplemental EIS before proceeding with funding for construction. A supplemental EIS would be needed if there are substantial changes to the proposed action or significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns.

EPA realizes that FutureGen is still in the initial, conceptual design phase; investigations are still being conducted; and, the configuration, goals, and research plans for the project have not been finalized. For these reasons, we can appreciate, as indicated in the final EIS, that some potential environmental concerns may exist. However, EPA also understands that DOE is funding research to develop mitigation techniques that will assist in correcting situations such as these. As an example, DOE is funding research for mitigation techniques to address the displacement of native fluids by the injected carbon dioxide that could migrate to the near surface or surface environment, potentially contaminating fresh water supplies, streams, rivers, or lakes.

Based on our review of the final EIS, we do not object to the implementation of this action. We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this final EIS and look forward to continued collaboration on this project. If you have any further questions, my staff contact for its review, Marthea Rountree; can be reached at 202-564-7141.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Anne Norton Miller", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Anne Norton Miller
Director
Office of Federal Activities